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UNITY

Freedom, Fellowship and Character in Religion

Official Organ of the Congress of Religion

THE SHEPHERD WHO STAYED

There are in Paradise
Souls neither great nor wise,
Yet souls who wear no less
The crown of faithfulness.

My master bade me watch the flock by night,
My duty was to stay. I do not know
What thing my comrades saw in that great light,
I did not heed the words that bade them go.
I know not were they maddened or afraid;
I only know I stayed.

The hillside seemed on fire; I felt the sweep
Of wings above my head; I ran to see
If any danger threatened these my sheep,
What though I found them folded quietly,
What though my brother wept and plucked my sleeve,
These were not mine to leave.

Thieves in the wood and wolves upon the hill,
My duty was to stay. Strange though it be,
I had no thought to hold my mates, no will
To bid them wait and keep the watch with me,
I had not heard that summons they obeyed;
I only know I stayed.

Perchance they will return upon the dawn
With word of Bethlehem and why they went.
I only know that, watching here alone,
I know a strange content.
I have not failed that trust upon me laid,
I ask no more—I stayed.

The Century. —*Theodosia Garrison.*

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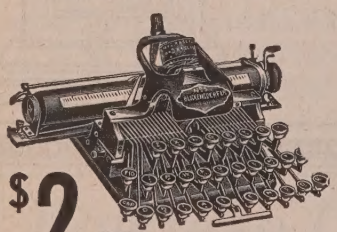

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UNITY

"HE HATH MADE OF ONE ALL NATIONS OF MEN"

VOL. LXXIX THURSDAY, AUGUST 2, 1917 NUMBER 23

Love the day, and do not leave the sky out of your landscape. With our ear to the south, we may hear the robin's first hymn under our window. Salute the Ideal which is the coming Actual! Live in that which shall be, and you will transform that which is. —*Emerson.*

An exchange contains a picture of an innocent old lady who did not take to smoking until she was seventy-six. After that she claimed that smoking made a new woman of her. Perhaps she is right. That is probably a safe age at which to begin the practice.

William Marion Reedy has some wholesome "Reflections" in *Reedy's Mirror* for July 6th concerning the East St. Louis slaughter of innocent negroes. He says, "We profess to be shocked by atrocities in Belgium. We have our own 'Huns,' only they are unorganized." . . . "Then the Illinois militia made its appearance and—did absolutely nothing." . . . "The cure in short is justice for the negro—for all men." . . . "We will not get rid of labor troubles by getting rid of the 'nigger.' . . . Give the worker, white or black, the opportunity to work and to secure the full reward of his labor and he will be too busy and happy to go shooting up his brother man."

Rev. Robert Whitaker, pastor of the Independent First Baptist Church of Los Gatos in *The Evening News* of San Jose, Cal., protested to the President of the United States against the injustice of "The conscription act that exempts ministers and even theological students while it proposes to force into the service a multitude of young men who abhor it and are conscientiously opposed to it," while many of the ministers and theological students exempted are active supporters of the war. UNITY agrees with the Rev. Mr. Whitaker. The non-ecclesiastical democracy of the United States comes dangerously near copying the vicious custom of the monarchial powers that assume control of the religious convictions and organizations of men.

The Congressional Record for June 20th contains twenty-four pages in fine type amounting to several hundred contributions from men high in the confidence of the country; governors of states, heads of universities, professors and publicists, expressing their opinion concerning the desirability of eliminating whiskey, many of them adding beer, from the sideboards of the nation during war time. It must have been a long time since there was such an exhibition of enlightened and expert opinion open to the consideration of Congress as this offered by the Hon. Charles H. Randall of California. The testimony would seem to be overwhelming and the only question that will not down is that which says, "as a war measure." Why not join with David R. Forgan, President of the National City Bank of Chicago, and say, "I am in favor of national prohibition during the war and *forever after.*"

A "Reverend" in good and regular standing sent the following reply to a communication from the Chicago office of peace workers:

Gentlemen: I have no use for a coward or a pacifist.
Yours,

We would suggest that there may be use for a dictionary in this minister's study, possibly for a simple handbook on manners, for manners are minor morals. There is something allied to intellectual if not moral confusion that confounds a pacifist with a coward. Nearly two thousand years ago there was a crucifixion on Mount Calvary. The chief actor was a pacifist, he refused to fight for his rights. Was he a coward or allied to cowards? Perhaps the preacher in question has thought of all this. At any rate, on behalf of the committee we venture to thank him for the courtesy of his note.

Horace Traubel in the *Conservator* for July weaves a confession at some length: "Maybe I ought to be down in the mouth, but I'm not." He knows that things seem to be against him. He realizes that "There is no use trying to contend against so overwhelming a force," but he is not "down in the mouth." He says, "You might as well quarrel with the sun for not shining just right as to quarrel with the social order for not being planned just right. . . . Make the best of a bad world. If the world still has a few sharp corners, don't turn them too suddenly. . . . . Whatever you do, don't suggest polishing down the corners. . . . Why should I now of all times take to flight?" UNITY joins the cheerful band for which

our exchange writes this chant. There is nothing to justify discouragement because it is dark and gloomy at 3 o'clock in the morning. Listen to the solitary whippoorwill who has already struck the note of the morning. Very soon the thrushes will come in with their orchestra of flutes, and by sunrise all the hens in the barnyard will begin their cackle. There is no ground for being discouraged.

The meadows glow with their burden of clover, alfalfa and timothy. There will be a great hay harvest this season. The rye, barley and oats are delighting the harvesters, the corn, yielding to the burst of creative sunlight that came with July, is growing so fast that the farmer's phrase is almost a demonstrable fact, "You can almost hear it grow." The cows are rejoicing in ample pasturage and in return yield a generous flow of milk. Farmers are busy, prosperous and happy. The roads are being improved, automobiles fill the streets at country railways stations, horses and buggies going to town are growing so scarce that they threaten to become curiosities. These are the facts that beset the hillside *sanctum* into which the Editor of UNITY has retired, and still alas! the sunlight is darkened and the summer joys are blighted by the awful overhanging clouds that gather over the "conscription list." UNITY shares the heartache with one of America's sweetest singers who in a private letter writes us: "I could hardly sleep last night for thinking of the terrible suffering that human beings are inflicting on each other, and of all the boys who had found their number called in the draft. Heavens, that we should have come to this after so many hundreds of years of Christianity!"

The Case of the Conscientious Objector

The Church Peace Union is compiling from representative clergy of many denominations throughout the country a consensus of opinion concerning the "Rights of the Conscientious Objector." In his circular letter Mr. Lynch, the Secretary, says, "It is a matter of the utmost importance that we know the minds of a large number of the religious leaders of the country on this subject. There has been a very hearty response to our inquiry, but we would greatly like to have your frank thought in the matter."

The question propounded by Dr. Lynch is the one that comes to the Editor of UNITY from many sources. It is the question uppermost in the minds of all thoughtful citizens of the United States in these solemn days. So we try once more to put UNITY on record.

1. *From the Standpoint of the Government.* The government has already recognized the "Conscientious Objector." Both President and Congress have made provision to respect the traditions and convictions of the non-militant religious confessions. And then, by some kind of subtle, inward connection, the government has assumed that there is something in the ministerial calling, even in the embryonic stages of the divinity student, that justifies exemption from the draft. Certainly neither President nor Congress would for one moment admit that ecclesiastical regulation or church creed is the final arbiter to the conscience of men and women.

It was "opened" to George Fox that war was wrong, the "Inner Light" revealed to him war's atrocities and the "Inner Voice" spoke the authoritative word of condemnation. Is the government, as represented by President and Congress, prepared to assume for one moment that the "Inner Light" has ceased to illumine other souls outside of the Quaker persuasion, even as George Fox was illuminated? Is the "Inner Voice" to be heard or heard to be respected only on behalf of those who can prove their outward church affiliation with the Quakers, Second Adventists and a few other minor sects? Quite the contrary is true. It is the fundamental postulate of Democracy, to say nothing of Christianity or the religiously sane, that no man can go behind his conscience; it is not infallible but it is the best guide available.

Our Republic is a child of conscientious objectors. Democracy assumes the supremacy of conscience. Channing enunciated a great political principle, as well as a high religious formula, when he said, "The sense of ought within is the highest gift of God to man." The hero of Calvary was a conscientious objector. The martyrs thrown to the wild beasts in the Roman Arena, Cromwell and his Roundheads, the Pilgrim Fathers, Lloyd Garrison, Wendell Phillips, Charles Sumner and Abraham Lincoln were "conscientious objectors." Their objections, all of them, were against outside dictation, against the power of law or convention to overrule the "Voice from within," and all of them were ready to pay the extreme penalty required of conscientious objection, even as the Nazarene did on Calvary.

If the conscientious objector today is persuaded that the command of the Decalogue which says, "Thou shalt not kill" is binding upon his conscience, to him there is no higher court of appeal. If he interprets the gospel message in terms of love, if the command, "Peter put up thy sword!" is to him definite and authoritative, can the government release him by act of Congress? If he has accepted the leadership, aye, the Saviorship of the Nazarene, the Supreme Pacifist, and if by subsequent studies of history and communion with his own soul, he objects to war in all its

forms as opposed to the fundamental requirements of the moral law, what right has the government to command him to suspend the moral law as he understands it?

What is the government to do with such a "conscientious objector"? It can force a gun into the hands of such an one, perhaps compel him to take his place on the battle line, but it cannot compel him to pull the trigger or to thrust the bayonet. Such a recruit secured by compulsion is at the cost of democracy, of philosophic consistency, ethical integrity and the abiding respect of the noble. But how is the government to decide? By all the tests known to law by which truth is sifted from error. It becomes a question of evidence to be sifted according to civil, not military, codes. Let a court of equity, and when asked for a jury of one's peers, decide. Exemption of the conscientious objector should not be a concession forced from the government but a right gladly granted. Happy is the government that has a body of citizens with consciences sufficiently alert to dare break with the conventions, accept the ostracism and pay the penalty that belongs to one who is true to his God as he understands the truth, though all other claims and amenities be set aside.

II. *From the Standpoint of the Current Press.* Only a superficial patriotism, unguided by history or by psychology, confuses, as so much of current journalism does, the "conscientious objector" with the "slacker" or the "coward." Only brave men dare to keep faith with conscience in the face of ridicule and scorn. The coward will enlist rather than face the sneers of his comrades. The "slacker," to use the ambiguous and ill favored word, will move along lines of least resistance, trusting to luck farther along, or, if need be, to his own precaution should the dire battle-field test come. He will there try to dodge the bullet. The experience of the soldiers of the United States, as of other countries, goes to prove that the coward is very free with his hurrahs for the Colors before they are carried to the firing line. The unillumined and consequently the unpatriotic alone will confuse the real conscientious objector with the coward and the sneak.

III. *From the Standpoint of the Objector.* His program is comparatively simple and his duty plain. If there are constitutional rights that protect him from conscription and compulsory service on foreign fields he has the right to appeal for his rights under the law. But that right can be tested by one as well as by a thousand objectors. The processes of law are deliberate and the decision must be awaited with patience. Meanwhile the "conscientious objector" is a law abiding member of society, anxious to do his part to promote the interests and continue the progress of home, nation and the world. He recognizes that there are two ways by which the conscientious man can be respectful to law, viz.:

1. To obey the law, conform to its requirements at any price when these requirements run parallel with his conscience and confirm his sense of duty, or make clear that which was before obscure.

2. Accept the penalty implied when the requirements do not run parallel with his conscience. Let those in power decide. If the penalty be obloquy, imprisonment, starvation, disease or death, it is for him to accept but never to resist. He must pay the penalty that goes with high conviction. He must practice what he preaches.

The conscientious objector must search himself with relentless impartiality, analyze his soul with the sincerity that belongs to the gallows, gibbet and the cross, and he must be willing to be searched by all the tests of outward law as instituted by the proceedings of courts and juries and then abide by the decision.

The government of the United States has assumed an awful responsibility when it has set the machinery at work which will snatch unnumbered thousands of its most prominent citizens, its hopeful youths, from their chosen vocations, from home environment and civic obligations in order to send them across the seas to suffer and to die for an assumed democracy, still entrusted to the keeping of kings and surrounded with the subtle forces of aristocracy, plutocracy and lordly pretentions. This awful responsibility it has assumed, let us hope, with an adequate sense of its solemnity and the far reaching character of the issues.

But if beyond all those interests it should lay violent hands upon the soul of a "single conscientious objector" who takes his orders from within, one who has committed his life to God, his Christ and to his conscience, it has taken the step that allies it to the damning tyrannies of history, the blighting compromises that first bring strife, then decay and death. It cannot be that the present Congress, with all its perplexities, and the historically trained President, will dare take this reactionary step that conforms to medieval practice and monarchical statesmanship, rather than to the democracy which has placed the United States where it now is in the vanguard of civilization. It is the hope of humanity.

We recognize the perplexity and have anticipated it from the first. We realize that the situation has not yet been fairly met, much less adequately solved.

Here is a typical case. What is the government going to do with this young man, who doubtless speaks for hundreds, perhaps thousands more, when he says,

> I will not take part in the killing of any human being so long as I have my judgment and my will. They may imprison me, starve me, hang me or shoot me if they will, but I will not attempt to kill! This is my clear duty as it

has been taught me in home, Sunday School and Church from my youth up. And all this teaching is reinforced by my own study, observation and reflection."

Bright is the future of the nation that has reared such young men. Its perpetuity is dependent upon the number of such citizens. They constitute the "pillars of society."

Once more we ask, What is the government to do with such youths?

The Free Religious Association

We take pleasure in reprinting this week an address by John Haynes Holmes on "The Religion of Rabindranath Tagore," not only because it is a timely discussion of a phase of religious thought and feeling in our day which is in great danger of being crowded aside and overlooked on account of the boisterous agitations now in the foreground of American life, but also because of the position of the author as President of the F. R. A.

This address first appeared as No. 4 in the series of leaflets published by the Free Religious Association of America under the title of "Messages for the Times." No. 1 is on "The Church and the World," No. 2 on "The International Mind," No. 3, "International Peace; the Challenge to America," by Arthur L. Weatherly. It is hard to preserve the proper spiritual perspective in these militant days, but the challenge that fifty years ago called the Free Religious Association of America into being is reiterated today with increasing significance. Many of the theological problems that then caused uneasiness and stirred up strife have passed by, they have been outgrown, but the sociological, economic and ethical elements of religion, always the more fundamental and permanent in all religions, are demanding a re-reading and a re-interpretation as never before. "Unity!" is the cry everywhere, it is the live theme in all conventions and conferences, it is the inspiration of many editorials in all religious journals. The Lutherans are the last to sound the come-together cry; Methodism, Presbyterianism and the Baptists are discussing it; all of them reaching after union within their lines. The Great Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, which claims to represent thirty different denominations, is the most spectacular and this far the most successful attempt to get together, but the very quest on all of these lines speedily breaks down the limits suggested. At the heart of each of these movements there must be an ominous sense of inadequacy and a thrilling glimpse of the still larger union. Of course Luther is larger than pan-Lutheranism; John Wesley's spirit overrides the outermost rim of pan-Methodism and Presbyterianism in its most inclusive form is busy at work, gnawing away the "ism." The biggest Presbyterians are too big for any Presbyterian pan-tocracy and the "immersionists" of all shades are busy in trying to find one another by abolishing their Close Communion and their deep water restrictions. The "union" they are all after will end in eliminating the incidental elements of immersion in the interest of the fundamental affirmations of Roger Williams and Alexander Campbell; the freedom of interpretation and the supremacy of the individual conscience. The very "Christianity" that the Federation of Churches seeks to establish mocks their petty boast of thirty denominations. Christianity differentiated from Judaism, opposed to, or independent of, the great prophets of Jewry and the sages of the Pagan world promptly becomes un-Christian.

Whatever road we take in the study of religion, be it a thought road, love road or life road, lands us on the mountain top where the sympathies of religion grope for the universalities. Eventually religion is only possible when it is free and freedom can only be experienced, much less maintained, when it is religious.

For this reason we reproduce Mr. Holmes' study of the great Hindu poet and philosopher who is leading so many "Christians" into the inner temple of all religions.

REFUGE

From my spirit's gray defeat,
From my pulse's flagging beat,
From my hopes that turned to sand
Sifting through my close-clenched hand,
From my own fault's slavery,
If I can sing, I still am free.

For with my singing I can make
A refuge for my spirit's sake,
A house of shining words, to be
My fragile immortality.

From *Poetry*. —*Sara Teasdale.*

The whole world is at war. The Sermon on the Mount is torn into scraps of paper, as Moses in the old time flung down the tables of the law, and broke them into a thousand pieces. But the commandments survived, and the beatitudes shall likewise survive. What shall be wrought at last out of the furnace of this fire, nobody knows; what purification of the church, what defeat of the devil, what uplifting of the ideals of the race, what manifestation of the kingdom of God, nobody knows. But this we know, that the word of Jesus Christ shall be fulfilled again, as in a thousand wars of old, and out of this evil shall come good. Though victory today and tomorrow attend the armies of the adversary, and the thrones of the wicked seem as solid as the everlasting hills, "Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." We may wait long, but we shall not be disappointed. *George Hodges.*

From "Religion in a World at War" (The Macmillan Company).

The Religion of* Rabindranath Tagore

An Address by John Haynes Holmes, Minister of the Church of the Messiah, New York, President of the Free Religious Association of America.

I cannot enter upon the discussion of such a subject as the religion of Sir Rabindranath Tagore, first citizen of India, knight of the British Empire, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature (1913), without reminding you at the outset of the difficulties of the task which I have assumed. The more I have studied and pondered the teachings of this great prophet of the Eastern world, the more I have become aware of the reality of these difficulties of which I speak; and I feel that I must lay them before you, for your sympathetic consideration, that you may not be too greatly surprised or disappointed at the inadequacy of my interpretation of my theme.

In the first place, therefore, may I remind you that I am speaking this morning of only a single aspect of the life and thought of a man who is in nothing more remarkable than in the manifoldness of his interests and activities. This partial treatment of a personality is well nigh unpardonable in the case of any distinguished and ample leader of human thought. It is particularly so in the case of Rabindranath Tagore. For if there is any one idea or principle which is conspicuous in this teacher's philosophy, and which he imposes upon his disciples with absolute finality, it is that of Unity. Constantly does he point out the folly of the western mind in trying to find out and comprehend the truth of things, by its favorite scientific method of dissection, isolation, microscopic observation. Think of trying to know a rose, for example, by plucking it from its stem, taking it into the laboratory, and there carefully tearing apart the petals and submitting them to chemical analysis! Such a process undoubtedly gives us the science of Botany, but it certainly fails to convey any knowledge of the rose as such. For this, we must go into the garden in the early morning, see the rose opening to the air, watch the sunlight glint upon its petals, look upon the dewdrop hiding like a precious jewel within its calyx, and note the gentle fragrance with which it bathes the atmosphere. The rose, in its wholeness alone, is the real rose; to divide it into parts is at once to destroy it, and thus remove it from our world.

What is true here of one single object like the rose, is true also of the universe. Unity is again the talisman. And yet the western mind is interested not in the universe, which by its very nature is a wholeness or nothing at all, but in those isolated factors of the universe which it pleases to call phenomena. Rending the universe apart into material fragments, as Osiris of ancient fable was torn asunder, it searches, like another Isis, for the living organism which it has itself destroyed. Unity is the secret of life; in the whole, and not in any of its parts, is vital reality to be discovered. Tagore is at one here with Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his *Each and All,* where he declares that

> "All are needed by each one;
> Nothing is fair or good alone."

It is this idea of Unity, as central in Tagore's thought of personality as in his thought of nature, which makes so unsatisfactory any attempt to isolate his function as a teacher of religion from the other highly various activities which have engaged his energies. "Tagore," says his disciple, Basanta Komar Roy, "is a profound philosopher, a patriotic leader, an historical investigator, a singer and composer, an able editor, a far-sighted educator, an ideal administrator, and, above all, a poet." To understand him in any one of these particulars, without considering all of them together as comprising a Unity of purpose and ideal, is of course impossible. Tagore's work as a poet is a part of his work as a political leader of the new India; his devotion to his school at Bolpur is an expression of his ideas as a philosopher. To an altogether remarkable extent he is a single personality. And yet, from the very limitations which are imposed upon me at this moment, I am forced to consider only one aspect of his life, and to this extent subject him to distortion.

A second difficulty, which confronts me in this address, is that of interpreting in terms of thought the work of a man who, in the last analysis, is not a systematic thinker at all, but a poet. Nobody can read the writings or listen to the addresses of Sir Rabindranath without seeing upon the instant that he is interested not in observing or teaching truth, in the strict sense of that word, but in singing the songs of beauty, joy and eternal life. If we turn to his writings, for example, we find his natural and therefore most perfect medium of expression in the inimitable poetry of *Gitanjali, The Garden,* and *Songs of Kabir.* The same qualities are manifest, however, in the book of university lectures, called *Sadhana,* in which he endeavors to set forth in systematic form the content of his philosophical and religious thought. Even if Tagore had never written a single line of poetry *per se,* this book would stamp him as primarily a poet, just as the *Essays* of Emerson do the same for the Concord sage. As we read *Sadhana,* we are first of all impressed by the sheer vividness and beauty of the poetic phrase. There is something almost unearthly, not to say heavenly, about the radiance which streams from the pages of this book. When we turn from the expression to the substance of thought, however, we find ourselves baffled, for we have here not so much a statement of divine philosophy as an attempt at meditative communion with the Unseen. Tagore confesses this fact in his "Preface," where he says, "Perhaps it is well for me to explain that the subject-matter of these papers published in this book has not been philosophically treated, nor has it been approached from the scholar's point of view. The writer has been brought up in a family where the texts of the Upanishads are used in daily worship; and he has had before him the example of his father who lived his long life in closest communion with God. . . . . So, in these papers, it may be hoped, western readers will have an opportunity of coming into touch with the ancient spirit of India as revealed in our sacred texts and manifested in the life of today."

But if this poetic quality is manifest in Tagore's writings, it is still more manifest in his public utterance. Compare his mode of speech, for example, with that of a typical orator of our own country, like Charles William Eliot. Both men hold their audi-

*Published in pamphlet form by the Free Religious Association of America, 120 Boylston Street, Boston. Price 10 cts. per copy.

ences enwrapped. In the case of Dr. Eliot, however, we are held by the progress of the speaker's thought, as, point by point, like a bricklayer building a wall, he constructs the towering fabric of his ideas. In the case of Tagore, on the other hand, we are held not at all by the significance or order of the arguments, but by the sheer beauty of their expression. We listen to Tagore as one listens to a singer, raptured and thrilled by the music of his voice and the poetry of his words. Indeed, at the climactic moments of his addresses, this Eastern seer becomes a singer. His clear, tenor voice rises in pitch and throbs with intensity, his words become a kind of chant or rhapsody. What is being said in terms of thought we know not, we care not; but what is being felt by the speaker, and conveyed to us in terms of feeling, we accept as a kind of angel song, and yield ourselves gladly to its mystic spell.

Tagore, therefore, is not a thinker but a poet. He himself expresses his true function, when, in the first poem of *Gitanjali,* he speaks of himself as a "little flute of a reed," through which God has "breathed melodies eternally new." And this is the man whom I am going to try to interpret to you this morning as a teacher of religion! Can you not see the difficulty involved? Is not the task, indeed, impossible—just as the similar task in reference to Emerson, for example, is also impossible? Tagore at any rate finds it so. "I boasted among men," he says in *Gitanjali,* "that I had known you. They see your pictures in all works of mine. They come and ask me, 'Who is he?' I know not how to answer them. I say, 'Indeed, I cannot tell.' . . . I put my tales of you into lasting songs. The secret gushes out from my heart. They come and ask me. 'Tell me all your meanings.' I know not how to answer them. I say, 'Ah, who knows what they mean.'"

Lastly, as a final difficulty in the way of any adequate interpretation of Tagore's religious thought, may I remind you, without any particular enlargement upon the theme, that this great teacher of India is an embodiment of the eastern mind, and that the distance between the eastern and western minds is greater, figuratively speaking, than the distance between New York and Bombay. I always feel very humble when I find myself listening to a voice from the East. I do not know how it may be with you, but for myself I must in honesty confess that I never listen to such a voice without having the unescapable impression that I am being addressed in a foreign tongue. I recognize the words; I find the words falling into familiar grammatical relations with one another; I see the sentences making paragraphs such as I have been acquainted with all my life. But when I try to discover what these words, sentences and paragraphs mean in terms of thought, I find myself caught as in a net, or lost as in a fog. It is as though I went into some great dining hall, and there on every hand saw vessels familiar to my sight and touch. I would feel at home, at least until I raised the covers on the vessels and looked within to see what they contained. Then I would see things strange, and feel myself upon the instant in strange places. Personally, I have very serious doubts of the ability of a coarse-grained Yankee intellect like mine, to comprehend in any real or final way the delicate intangibilities of an Indian mind, like Tagore's. Certainly that westerner is a bolder man than I, who can say with conviction that he has penetrated the secret and sacred mysteries of eastern personality!

Now these are some of the difficulties which I feel to be in the way of any adequate interpretation on my part of the religion of Sir Rabindranath Tagore. Of the three which I have named, the last would seem perhaps to be the most serious, to the extent at least that it is rooted in what we are prone to call "the nature of things." In the case of Sir Rabindranath, however, this fundamental difference between East and West is not only not so serious a difficulty as might at first sight be imagined, but on the contrary is the very clue which we need for entrance upon any understanding, however inadequate, of what he has to give to us as a religious teacher. For, however it may be with our western understanding of the East, Tagore himself has achieved an understanding of the West which is nothing short of an actual revelation. He is an easterner of the easterners, as we shall see later on; but his comprehension of the significance as well as the limitations of western science, his reliance upon education as a method of social advancement, his sympathy with the farthest aspirations of modern womanhood, his rigorous critique of what he calls our "cult of nationalism," his curious appreciation of such a characteristically American literary product as Walt Whitman—all reveal a truly extraordinary understanding of the western mind, the western viewpoint, all the good and evil indeed of our western civilization. It is just here, to my mind, in this entrance of so typically eastern a mind into the very center of western experience and western idealism, that we find the true significance of Tagore. If there is anything permanent in his work as a teacher and reformer—and I believe there is—it is to be found in this deliberate attempt of his to reconcile the apparently irreconcilable differences of East and West, and thus to give a universal expression to the spiritual aspirations of mankind. It is here at least that we must begin our interpretation of Tagore, whether we end there or not. Therefore do I ask you to consider with me for a moment, as a kind of introduction to Tagore's own thought, the nature of the profound psychological differences which have so long been barriers of separation between Orient and Occident.

In the opening pages of *Sadhana,* Sir Rabindranath has an illuminating passage on the origins of western and eastern civilizations. In the West, he says, civilization began in Greece and "was nurtured within city walls." In the East, on the other hand, "when the first Aryan invaders appeared in India, it was a vast land of forests;" and it was in these forests, close to the ground, beneath the shadows of great trees, "surrounded by the vast life of nature . . . that (Indian) civilization had its birth."

Now right here, in this accidental relationship to nature, suggests Tagore, began the separation of the western from the eastern mind; and upon this relationship, as upon a foundation of reality, were reared the later differences which have become so manifest. The western mind, looking out upon a world which is separated from it and therefore alien, becomes eager to know something about its secrets, and therefores enters upon those activities of exploration and investigation which constitute so large a part of the history of western life. The eastern mind, on the

other hand, finding itself in the midst of a world which serves its needs, seeks not to know what is hidden, but only to enjoy in quietness and peace what is so freely given. The western mind, starting forth to explore and examine an alien world, soon comes to the point of desiring to subdue this world to its purposes, and remake it to match its needs. The eastern mind, on the other hand, is satisfied to acquiesce in nature, to take what she has to give, be it good or evil, with the result that a kind of fatalism has fallen upon the eastern world like a magician's spell. Again, as another stage of development, the western mind, as a consequence of its passion for knoweldge and conquest, becomes intensely active, and moulds a life which is supremely one of creative activity in the outer world. The eastern mind, by way of contrast, in satisfaction of a need for action which the outer world does not satisfy, turns in upon itself and becomes predominantly meditative. Ethical differences between West and East now begin to make their appearance. Thus the western mind becomes more and more obsessed with the lust of possession; it wants to acquire, accumulate, hold, use for itself, the riches which it finds so abundantly in the natural world. To all this, on the other hand, the eastern mind is contemptuously indifferent. This mind seeks not possession of the world without, but realization of the world within. Hence the seer, the mystic, the monk, takes that place of supreme veneration in the eastern world which is held in our western world by the soldier, the statesman, or the merchant.

This whole problem of difference can best be summed up in a single historical generalization, and a single philosophical affirmation. From the standpoint of history, we note the undeniable fact that the East has never produced so much as one distinguished scientist, or contributed to the race so much as one original scientific theory or application of scientific theory. The West, on the other hand, has produced not one supreme religious prophet, or one original type of religion. The world-religions, as we know them in human annals — Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism, Christianity, Mohammedanism—are all of them eastern not only in their origin, but in their essential genius. From the standpoint of philosophy, we note the fact that the West is predominantly materialistic in its ideas, desires and activities, while the East is predominantly spiritual. The contrast between the German scientist, evolving in his laboratory some new industrial process which will increase the wealth of the world a thousand-fold, and the Indian yogi, completely absorbed with his spiritual exercises, is something of the picture that we need to embody this fact of psychological diversity, and its significance in the history of mankind.

Now between two such widely separated attitudes as these, there would seem to be no possibility of reconciliation or harmony. Rudyard Kipling apparently spoke the inevitable word when he wrote that "East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet." And yet, when this familiar phrase was quoted some years ago at a dinner in London, given in honor of Sir Rabindranath Tagore, he instantly caught up the challenge and gave it as his conviction that, while it is true that "East is East, and West is West," yet "the twain" are as surely destined to meet as the east and west of our horizon when carried on and on into the unbounded reaches of the infinite. To find this meeting-place, at any rate, would seem to be the task to which Tagore has deliberately set himself. All the variety of his poetic and prophetic genius has been dedicated to this great task of reconciliation. That in the end his work is something more than this, will become evident, I trust, as we proceed. But it is here that it assumes its first significance, and here, therefore, that we must find our way of entrance into the secrets of his thought.

In his endeavor to bring the best of East and West together, Rabindranath Tagore, always an easterner of easterners, starts out with the characteristically oriental declaration that man is fundamentally a spiritual being, and is charged in this life with the great business of finding his own soul. He does not attempt to demonstrate the proposition that "man is a spirit"; such a fact, he says, transcends demonstration. It is a matter of inward realization, as indubitable and therefore as far beyond the need of proof, as our consciousness of individual existence in the world. To realize this spirituality, to find our souls, as Tagore puts it, this is our appointed task. "Man is here to find himself," says Sir Rabindranath in *Sadhana.* "Man's history is the history of his journey to the unknown in quest of the realization of his immortal self—his soul."

In this affirmation, Tagore accepts the eastern, and eschews the western, mind. "Man is abroad to satisfy needs which are more than food and clothing," is his initial defiance of the Occident. In the very next step in the progress of his thought, however, he turns flatly away from the East, and adopts a characteristically western point of view. For the East, he says, in the quest of the soul, has done the fatal thing of seeking spiritual realization in the inner world to the exclusion of the outer. The eastern mind has retired within itself, and made fast the door against nature and mankind. Thereby has it deliberately shut itself off from all possibility of the best fulfillment of its ideal purposes, excluded itself from the very place where the soul has its true abode and is therefore to be found. In following this pathway of introspection and mystic quietude, the eastern mind has forgotten, or failed to see at all, two things. In the first place, says Tagore, it has neglected the great fact that "it is the very characteristic of life that it is not complete within itself; *it must come out.* Its truth is in the commerce of the inside and the outside. In order to live, the body must maintain its various relations with the outside light and air—not only to gain life-force, but also to manifest it. . . . The same with the soul. It cannot live on its own internal feelings and imaginings. It is ever in need of external objects; not only to feed its inner consciousness, but to apply itself in action, not only to receive but to give." The second fact, forgotten or neglected by the introspective eastern mind, is that the very essence of life is action, movement, progress, creation, expenditure, use—that the synonym of death is inaction, stagnation, hoarding. How beautifully does Tagore illustrate this fact in the figure of the river, which is a river only as it continues to flow, and thus to carry away "obstructions and dead accumulations." Still more striking is his picture of life under the image of a lamp. "The lamp," he says, in *Sadhana,* "contains its oil, which it holds securely in its close grasp and guards from the least loss. Thus

it is separate from all other objects around it, and is miserly. But when lighted, it finds its meaning at once; its relation with all things far and near is established, and it freely sacrifices its fount of oil to feed the flame."

Life, therefore, in terms of self-realization, means relations with the outer world—activity, service, sacrifice, in this world. To find one's soul is not to save oneself inwardly, like a lamp its oil, but to give oneself outwardly, like a lamp its flame. It seems extraordinary, almost incredible, to find an easterner thus proclaiming the western gospel of social action, life in the outer world, finding one's soul by losing it. And yet Rabindranath Tagore, like Jesus before him, teaches exactly this principle, and thus reveals the possibility of bringing together into one universal synthesis the diametrically opposed viewpoints of Orient and Occident.

"Realization through action"—this is the second step in the unfolding of Tagore's religious thought. But what does he mean by "action"? In what sense are we to invade the outer world and seek therein the discovery and possession of our souls?

It is in answer to this fundamental question that Sir Rabindranath breaks as radically with the western mind, as he has already broken with the eastern mind on the matter of inward contemplation or quietude. Action is the desideratum, is his word; in no other way can we find our souls than by seeking perpetual contact with nature and with man. But this action, this contact, must be fulfilled in a spirit and with a purpose as far separated from that manifested by the West as the north pole is distant from the south. The West seeks action along the lines of conquest, possession, acquisition, accumulation. It plunges into the world with the sole idea of plunder and enrichment. It seeks contact with mankind, with no higher or better object than that of exploitation and power. The western mind interprets action in terms of lust, greed, opulence, ambition, rule, wealth, fame. The western mind is hungry, and must be fed; it is lustful, and must be satisfied; it is empty, and must be filled. Eager to gain and not to give, to acquire and not to serve, to plunder others and thereby enrich itself, it misses the very treasure which it is seeking; or, if it finds it, buries it beneath the rubbish of its accumulations, or destroys it utterly by the violence of its capricious passions.

It is here, on this point of the base greed and sordid materialism of western action, that Rabindranath Tagore becomes as a veritable Jeremiah calling down woes upon our sinful generation. There is something terrible, not to say sublime, in the wrath of this gentle seer as he looks upon our western world and points out the atrocious abominations of its life. Here we are, in our individual lives, seeking that freedom which is the sign and symbol of spiritual fulfillment, and we are so gross in our idea of how to treat the world and our fellowmen that, in our very quest of freedom, we enslave ourselves to money, luxury, ambition—toil which brings no reward, activity which finds no peace. Here is nature, full of beauty for our admiration, and we plunder it; only to find ourselves the slaves of the booty we pile up and must therefore protect from the lust of others. Here are our fellowmen, full of goodness for our love, and we exploit them, rob them, abuse them, kill them; only to find ourselves linked with a "body of death" which poisons the very life we have tried thus foolishly to foster. And what is true of individuals, is even more true of these groups of individuals termed nations. How have the nations sought security in armaments, happiness in wealth and trade and imperialistic power, the higher life in the greater force of rule and conquest—only to live in fear, suspicion, and hatred, and in the end to bring upon themselves the hopeless ruin of the Great War! What wonder that Tagore is a socialist, for the essence of capitalism is the very selfishness which he finds to be the foe of all true "realization through action"! What wonder that Tagore is a pacifist, for the essence of existing international relations is the very lust, deceit and pride which are as oil hoarded and unlit, and therefore hidden in cold, darkness and decay! Tagore's whole view of western civilization is summed up in the thirty-first poem of *Gitanjali*—and what an indictment of all our western pride it is!—which I quote in part:

" 'Prisoner, tell me, who was it that wrought this unbreakable chain?'

" 'It was I' said the prisoner, 'who forged this chain very carefully. I thought I could outdo everybody in the world in wealth and power. I thought my invincible power would hold the world captive, leaving me in a freedom undisturbed. Thus night and day I worked at the chain with huge fires and cruel hard strokes. When at last the work was done and the links were complete and unbreakable, I found that it held me in its grip.' "

Yes!—action is the secret of realization, but not the selfish action of the West. Realization means freedom, like the flight of a bird—and this is slavery. Realization means joy, like the lilt of a song—and this is fear. Realization means beauty, like the flashing leap of a fish from the Ganges*—and this is ugliness. Realization means life, like love—and this is death. Love!—this is the magic word. If we are to find our souls, we must indeed "come out." But this invasion of the outer world must be like a band of pilgrims, not like a conquering army. We must "come out" not to get but to give, not to subdue but to serve, not to hoard but to spend. We must love—that is all!—love the stars, the sea, the grass; love the child, the mother, the aged man. Love is the law of life, the road to freedom, the pathway to God. For lo! as we love, we find that what we love is of like nature with ourselves. In the sun and the stars, in the fragrant rose and the singing bird, in "the poorest, and lowliest, and lost" of our fellowmen, we find our brethren, our spiritual kin, our own souls. A common life, revealed and quickened by our love, is seen in them all. We become one with them, and they with us. We find our souls. This higher, better, nobler self, unknown before, is discovered and laid hold on. The task of self-realization is done. We have lived, reached our goal, joined hands and heart with God!

Now it is in this great message of (1) self-realization, through (2) social action, in (3) the spirit of love, that we find the reconciliation of East and West attempted by Tagore. It is in this also that we find the content of his religious thought, the essence of his religion. Three points are here noteworthy.

(1) In the first place, Rabindranath Tagore, like

*See *Sadhana*, page 110.

every great religious prophet the world has seen, proclaims the reality of God, the universal presence of God, the life of nature and of man in God. Unity is here the great word. One life is in all and through all and over all; and this one life is the divine life, the infinite, the eternal, God! "The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measure. It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers. It is the same life that is rocked in the ocean cradle of birth and death, in ebb and flow." Tagore gives little suggestion of personality in his conception of God. He speaks rarely, if at all, of the Father. But so near, so real, so living, is this God, that he becomes to us as a presence everywhere seen and understood and loved. In sun and dust-grain, in bird and fish, in work-shop and tool, in home and wife and child, in the secret places of the heart—here is God, a-near and far, sublime and humble, to be adored and loved and served. "Thou art the sky, and thou art the nest as well."

(2) Secondly, Tagore, like every supreme prophet of God, proclaims the gospel of religion applied, of social action, of God realized in the world of life. Not in meditation, or lonely prayer, or secret quietude, or remote asceticism, is religion rightly to be expressed. But out in the world, down in the slums, amid the dust and heat of the race, is the pathway of the soul. No exposition of this aspect of his thought is needed, in view of the eleventh poem of *Gitanjali,* so extraordinary as a product of the eastern mind:

"Leave this chanting and singing and telling of beads! Whom dost thou worship in this lonely dark corner of a temple with doors shut? Open thine eyes and see thy God is not before thee! He is there where the tiller is tilling the hard ground, and where the pathmaker is breaking stones. He is with them in sun and shower, and his garment is covered with dust. Put off thy holy mantle and even like him come down on the dusty soil! . . . Come out of thy meditations and leave aside thy flowers and incense! What harm is there if thy clothes become tattered and stained? Meet him and stand by him in toil and in sweat of thy brow."

(3) Lastly, Tagore is the preacher of joy. Joy in our communion with God, and in our service of man! Joy in the beauty of the world, and in the goodness of life! Joy in our labor, and in our rest after labor! Joy in struggle, and in the peace that followeth struggle! Joy in life, and joy in death! In this word, "joy," is perhaps to be found Tagore's supreme contribution to the life and thought of our time. His is a joy which is not shallow but deep, not empty but full, not trivial but sublime. It is a joy which recognizes evil, but overcomes it in the good that it is in our power to perform. It is a joy that faces death, and gives death its place in the drama of life eternal. It is a joy which makes not only glad, but pure, the heart of man, and not so much easy as august the task of earth. It is in his treatment of death, perhaps, that Tagore gives best expression to his thought of joy. Not since Whitman wrote his chant of death, has the world seen such poems of glad salutation to the eternal mystery as are found in the closing pages of *Gitanjali.* As a bridegroom cometh to meet his bride, so Tagore approaches death, "the last fulfillment of life," the guest to whom is to be offered in joy "the full vessel of life."

In these three aspects of his thought, do we find the full expression of what we may call the religion of Tagore. That this religion is a reconciliation of East and West, is evident. In his thought of God, Tagore is a true son of that eastern world which has produced every great and true religion the world has ever known. In his thought of social action, Tagore is an appropriator of the best that the West has to offer to mankind. In bringing his thought of God to the West, he brings what the West most needs, for it is materialism that threatens to be the West's undoing. In bringing his thought of social action to the East, he brings what the East most needs, for "too much meditation and metaphysical speculation have ruined India." In bringing each to the other, and joining them in a synthesis whose name is "Joy," he unites the severed East and West in that fundamental unity which is humanity.

It is here, in the higher human significance of this great synthesis, that we come in the end to what is the deeper meaning of Tagore and his teaching. "When the West discovers the East, and the East discovers the West," writes Basanta Komar Roy, in his biography of Tagore, "humanity will discover itself automatically. Then the illumination will come to 'break the walls,' and this world will be 'one luminous whole,' 'one perfect music.'" It is from this point of view, that Tagore rises to the stature of the great universal teachers of all time. You must have noted, as I expounded his message, that it contains nothing new. It is the gospel of Buddha, of Jesus, of Channing—the sacred word of the life of the spirit. Old, and yet as new as man's persistent rejection of its truth! How, in an age of indescribable distraction and agony, does this great gospel sound with new power in our ears! But shall we listen and accept? If so, we shall do what no generation of men in any age has ever done. But that we must listen and accept, if our civilization, like all others which have preceded it, is not to perish, is as certain as the movement of the stars. Tagore speaks to us at once the word of hope and the curse of doom. As we choose, so shall we live—or die!

Thoreau and "The Wild"

What differentiates Thoreau from European writers on nature is, primarily, his intense Puritanism; what differentiates him from other American writers—Bryant, Lowell, Emerson, and the rest, most of whom share his Puritanism—is, primarily, his ardent yearning for wildness.

"There is in my nature, methinks, a singular yearning toward all wildness," he wrote in his first book. Later he prepared a lecture on "Walking, or the Wild," and indeed in all of his characteristic work we find what might be termed his doctrine of the Wild. "At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things," he writes, "we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and sea be infinitely wild." Close about us lies the friendly world of nature, but whenever we make our way into it, suddenly it grows strange and wild, the explored becomes unexplorable, and we are aware of contact with a life "pasturing freely where we never wander." That is

the Wild. If we were only alive enough, we should be able to enter upon that larger, freer existence which the Wild leads: "The most alive is the wildest."

The Wild, then, is living Nature, the inscrutable personality that animates the flux, resembling in some respects the *élan vital* of our day, yet really very different because static. Not a systematic speculative thinker, Thoreau seems to have had a somewhat odd notion that the physical world is inhabited by a personality with (perhaps) a spiritual universe of its own, while we, inhabiting the same physical world, have (perhaps) a different (and higher) spiritual universe. Sometimes he would breathe the humane air of his proper spiritual order; sometimes, more rarely, the wilder air of the spiritual order of nature. When the latter impulse dominated him, it seemed to him that attainment meant no less than some kind of actual union, or transfusion, with nature. He would "eat the brown earth." On another day he records a curiously gross-spiritual emotion; he "worships," he says, the brownish light in the sod on certain wet days in March, feels as if he "could eat the very crust of the earth; I never felt so terrene, never sympathized so with the surface of the earth." Later in the same month he could "stroke and kiss the very sward, it is so fair." Again, he tells a correspondent that he grows "savager and savager every day, as if fed on raw meat." That raw meat had its powerful charms is indicated by the passage in "Walden" in which he tells how, one evening as he was returning to the hut, chancing to see a woodchuck steal across his path in the gathering darkness, he "felt a strange thrill of savage delight, and was strongly tempted to seize and devour him raw." On one or two occasions while he lived at the pond, he goes on to confess, he found himself wandering through the woods "like a half-starved hound, with a strange abandonment, seeking some kind of venison which I might devour, and no morsel could have been too savage for me." The whole chapter, indeed ("Higher Laws"), is a study of the dual life he was impelled to lead, one rank and savage, the other spiritual, or to use his own terms, one wild, the other human.

Thoreau's lust (hardly too strong a word) for rainstorms and swamps is one of the most conspicuous instances of his yearning for wildness. He would like to sit in a distant cave throughout "a three weeks' storm, cold and wet," to give a tone to his system. Better still a swamp; to have your house abut on a forbidding swamp is to dwell next to Elysium. Although for some reason he failed to select so advantageous a site for his woodland cabin, he visited the swamps of his parish with assiduous frequency, and entered into their life, in a double sense, with the keenest sympathy. Sometimes, as if to be civilized, he aims, ostensibly, to go a-cranberrying, or to find the kalmia, though what he always relishes is not the cranberries or the kalmia, but the "cold and bracing" wading in the stagnant water and muck, "amid the water andromeda and the sphagnum, scratching my legs with the first and sinking deep in the last. The water is now gratefully cool to my legs, so far from being poisoned in the strong waters of the swamp. It is a sort of baptism for which I had waited." Superior, however, to merely wading would be the luxury of standing "up to one's chin in some retired swamp for a whole summer's day, scenting the sweet-fern and bilberry blows, and lulled by the minstrelsy of gnats and mosquitoes. A day passed in the society of those Greek sages, such as described in the 'Banquet' of Xenophon would not be comparable with the dry wit of cranberry vines, and the fresh Attic salt of the moss beds. Say twelve hours of genial and familiar intercourse with the leopard frog."

This emotional attachment has its intellectual counterpart in that doctrine of the Wild which he preached in season and out of season. Briefly stated, it is this: that all civilization refers back to primitive nature, derives thence its title to permanence, and ever and anon deliberately reunites itself with its source of vitality. If it does not, it is a moribund civilization. Thus, in the fable of Romulus and Remus, Thoreau reads the eternal truth that every state that has attained eminence has drawn nourishment and vigor from *alma natura*. The children of the Roman Empire, not being suckled by wolves, gave place to the northern barbarians who were. The continent of America is the she-wolf of our time, he goes on to say, and the children of the diseased civilization of Europe, responding to her coarse ministrations, are reinvigorated, are enabled to found here a new Rome. In time this Rome of the West will likewise languish, if the rank soil that sustains it is allowed to become exhausted; it can be maintained only by ever-recurrent reliance on the Wild. "Surely good courage will not flag here on the Atlantic border, as long as we are flanked by the Fur Countries. There is enough in that sound to cheer one under any circumstances. The spruce, the hemlock, and the pine will not countenance despair."

Never was there a more convinced believer in the essential goodness of nature. Her rectitude is attested, he asserts, by the uprightness of trees; and "Disease and a rain-drop cannot coexist." In her large equanimity and antiseptic purity, she is medicine for body and soul, and no disease is beyond her magical healing power. "They bury poisoned sheep up to the necks in earth to take the poison out of them." She is completely healthy and innocent, and is an ideal to guide ever erring humanity. One might regard Thoreau, on a hasty examination, as accepting the charming myth of a nature of the Golden Age, smiling, tender, artless, not the slimy, hoary, shagged beast of a nature of prehistoric periods. But actually he had the modern vision of nature as red in tooth and claw. There is a tragedy, he said, at the end of the life of every wild creature. His "innocent" nature is fond of violence, fond of what a superficial view holds repulsive—that is one aspect of her innocence. "We are cheered," he wrote in a significant passage in "Walden," "when we observe the vulture feeding on the carrion which disgusts and disheartens us, and deriving health and strength from the repast. . . I love to see that Nature is so rife with life that myriads can be afforded to be sacrificed and suffered to prey on one another; that tender organizations can be so serenely squashed out of existence like pulp,—tadpoles which herons gobble up, and tortoises and toads run over in the road; and that sometimes it has rained flesh and blood! . . . The impression made on a wise man is that of universal innocence." Thoreau's outlook on nature, indeed, does not suffer from a trace of Transcendental anæmia. He looks the facts in the eye, even the ugliest, sees the struggle for existence no less than the in-

spiriting sunset, and gives us, in the end, something like a whole view. That view was, of course, predestined to be favorable. Even so dread a word as Necessity he stripped of its terrors by regarding it as "only another name for inflexibility of good." Nature was bound to be good. No aspect of nature's wildness could repel him.

Everywhere he looked for the Wild. "In literature," he asserted, "it is only the wild that attracts us," though here the term means little more than spontaneity, the absence of conscious technique and conventional thought and feeling. English literature as a whole, the best of it included, he pronounced "essentially tame and civilized," imitative of the Classics. Grecian mythology had its root in a fertile nature, but even the Classics fall short of a perfect wildness. Again, he peered into the past of his American civilization to see what primitive vigor lay behind the modern culture. He had more than his share of the romantic absorption in the remote, in the primitive, in sources. "Strange spirits, demons," he says of the Indians, "whose eyes could never meet mine; with another nature and another fate than mine." The old warfare, waged in the very fields he walked on, seemed to him unreal, shadowy, and yet he loved to muse over it, with a still intensity, hoping now and again to obtain a true vision of the life of those far days. He would know "what manner of men they were, how they lived here, their relation to nature, their arts and their customs, their fancies and superstitions. They paddled over these waters, they wandered in these woods, and they had their fancies and beliefs connected with the sea and the forest, which concern us quite as much as the fables of Oriental nations do"—and that means a good deal when said by so devout a lover of the Bhagavat-Gita.

Foolish indeed, our poets and philosophers, who regret that we have no antiquities, no ruins to remind us of our past, for everywhere is our soil laden with relics, arrowheads, implements, stone chips—the wind can hardly blow away the surface, he says, without bringing to light the chips made by some aboriginal fletcher. He looked for such relics incessantly. It was actually his habit, he states, when, in the fall, some sandy field had been plowed, to "take note of it," and next spring to pay a visit as soon as the earth began to dry. Often he spent whole afternoons, especially in the spring, in pacing back and forth over such a sandy field. Indian relics were the gold which the sands of Concord yielded, and indeed he often thought at night "with an inexpressible satisfaction and yearning of the *arrowheadiferous* sands of Concord." He trained his eye for an arrowhead to an astonishing keenness, so that, in comparison, his walking companion, if he had one, was virtually blind. There is a familiar story that suggests this. His companion remarking, "I do not see where you find your Indian arrowheads," Thoreau stooped to the ground, picked one up, and gave it to him with the remark, "Here is one." Luck, in such matters, is always on the side of the sharp eye.

Why did Thoreau admire the Indian? First, perhaps, on account of his relation to nature. The Indian was fitted to see and understand the wildness of nature as no white man could, because he was really at home in the woods. "The charm of the Indian to me is that he stands free and unconstrained in Nature, is her inhabitant and not her guest, and wears her easily and gracefully." He envied the Indian this familiar, off-hand relation, and reproduced it remarkably well when one considers how introspective he was. If he was at home anywhere, it was in the woods and meadows of Concord. And next he admired the Indian's reticence and stoicism. Though doubtless inborn in Thoreau, these traits were almost certainly greatly strengthened in him through emulation: had there been no Indian background, one suspects that his Indian traits would not have flourished. In "Walden" he relates with gusto the story of Winslow's reception by Massasoit and his tribe. "They had nothing to eat themselves, and they were wiser than to think that apologies could supply the place of food to their guests; so they drew their belts tighter and said nothing about it." Surely that is as typical of Thoreau as it is of Massasoit's Indians—he went through life forever tightening his belt and saying nothing about it. It is mainly for these traits—an easy relation to nature, reticence, and stoical endurance—that Thoreau admired the Indian, aside, to be sure, from the misty picturesqueness of his life in aboriginal Concord. Nothing suggests better the intensity of his admiration than his death-bed words—"moose" and "Indian."

To the Maine woods he made two excursions to satisfy his appetite for wildness and to study the Indian at first hand. He succeeded in learning a great deal, and in satisfying his appetite for wildness, to the point of nausea. He did not go to the woods, he complains, for moose-hunting, and he condemns the Indian's savageness—a very genuine type of wildness—roundly. "What a coarse and imperfect use Indians and hunters make of nature! No wonder that their race is so soon exterminated. I already, and for weeks afterward, felt my nature the coarser for this part of my woodland experience." He returned to the "smooth but still varied landscape" of Concord with manifest relief. Wildness and the wilderness are a very good thing, no doubt, but they are not all of life; for a place to spend one's years in, it seemed to him, Concord was immeasurably superior to the wilderness, "necessary as the latter is for a resource and a background, the raw material of all our civilization." He goes on to remark that it is the partially cultivated country that has been the source of inspiration to the poets of the past, and will be to the poets of the future. The logger and pioneer precede the poet—eat the wild honey, perhaps, but the locusts also; remove the decaying wood and the spongy mosses of the rank forest, and build hearths and humanize nature for the poet. It is well for the poet, at proper intervals, to visit the logger's path and the Indian's trail; but let him dwell where "art and refinement" have altered the face of nature by making it more expressive, not only of man, but also to man.

The Dial. —*Norman Foerster.*

The true glory of kindness consists not so much in some signal acts of generosity or charity as in those kind offices and unpretending services of love, whose constant influence is like a healthy atmosphere, unseen, yet indispensable to our happiness. It consists in those "sweet, small courtesies of life, which sweaten the cup of existence as we drink it."

—*Charles Follen.*

The Lady from Montana

"How about women holding office?"

The average objector to woman suffrage generally puts this question to an advocate with the finality of playing a trump card. Usually we counter with questions such as these: "Was not Queen Elizabeth a wise ruler?" "Would not Jane Addams make a good mayor?" "How about women school superintendents?" "Are not women now doing most of the work in minor public offices?" At least I am free to confess this is the tack I have usually adopted on the platform and in personal discussions.

Even if I had believed it possible to elect a woman representative to the 65th Congress, I should hardly have considered it helpful to the cause of suffrage to argue the proposition with a hostile audience. If I had done so, it would have been on the theory that such an exceptional event would only happen when an exceptional woman, exceptionally qualified was a candidate, a national figure, such as Miss Addams, Dr. Shaw or Mrs. Catt.

Since the fourth of March Jeannette Rankin of Montana has been a member of the house of representatives. "The Lady from Montana" is a fine type of American womanhood. But what surprises the visitors in the galleries most is that she is "typical" rather than "different." Slender, young looking, simple but becomingly dressed, Miss Rankin sits at ease or moves about with a poise and grace that makes her presence seem as fitting on the floor of the House of Representatives as in the drawing room.

If you call on her at her office, you find the womanly touch there. The furniture is arranged conveniently. There are flowers on her desk. Miss Rankin has the social gift. Her expressive face reflects her changing thought. She has had a wide range of experience, is humorous, resourceful and fascinating in conversation. Liberal minded, sympathetic, trained in economics, her attitude on public questions represents the progressive and enlightened twentieth century spirit.

Miss Rankin has won the universal respect and esteem of her colleagues in Congress. When the Food Bill was up she offered the following amendment, to the clause providing for a food census:

"Provided, That the Secretary of Agriculture shall, so far as practicable, engage the services of women for the work herein provided for."

It was unanimously adopted. The brief pertinent "maiden speech" which Miss Rankin made on this occasion seems to me a most satisfactory answer to the question "How about women holding offices?" It appeared in the congressional record of May 28th as follows:

"Mr. Chairman, the work provided for in this paragraph—such as gathering information, extending and enlarging the news service, and preventing waste—includes activities that we have been accustomed to seeing women engaged in. And when these activities are so closely related to the home as is the food question, women are especially well fitted by their training and experience to do this work.

"It is self evident that women are going to fill many positions that have been filled by men in the past, and this is one of the places where they can be used effectively.

"Women officials, with their understanding and sympathy for home problems, will inspire a confidence in the home woman, and will encourage her to cooperate with the Government in this emergency.

"Women as housekeepers must learn to think of food in carload lots, in transit, in storage, in the board of trade, and in the national markets as well as in the small portions on the family table.

"By using woman officials to aid in this work we will concentrate the attention of all women on the larger bearings of the food problem. It will bring the home woman into closer co-operation with the Government.

"Our higher educational institutions have been turning out a large body of women who are trained to deal with fundamentals from a scientific standpoint. We have in these women a new source of service which we should not waste at this time. I feel sure that these women will be capable and faithful in doing this constructive work. It would be to the advantage of the Government to utilize the services of trained women in the place where they would count the most for the country during this present crisis and also in the future.

"Food conservation on a national scale is but the natural outgrowth of woman's traditional work. Women in the past have been concerned with the immediate preparation of food from one meal to another. They must now consider the food supply for the year. They must be individually concerned with the food supply for the whole country. And now, as we face this international problem of feeding the people, the responsibility is placed on all of us.

"We know that with our unparalleled resources and improved methods of production there is no need that anyone should go hungry. Women must take an intelligent and responsible share in the world's work if we are to see that all the people are fed all the time."

—*Belle Case La Follette.*

La Follette's Magazine.

FIDENTIA

Whence came my soul,
The essential me?
I cannot know,
But this I see—
That whence I came
Thence I must go.

I had no fear,
I felt no pain,
When here I came;
And when I go,
O soul, this know
Nor fear nor pain
Shall with thee go.

If Father's hand
Did bring thee here,
Then that same hand
Will lead thee there.
If life has grown
From less to more,
Then life more life
Is still in store.

—Wallace K. Harrison, M. D.

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THE FIELD

"The World is my country, to do Good is my Religion."

TOWER HILL LETTER

Coming back to our beautiful Hill year after year there is never lack of hearty welcome. Those who have been fortunate enough to arrive here ahead of us draw us quickly into the old atmosphere; our farmer neighbors have a hearty "glad to see you," friends over in the Valley send greetings across the hills and even the cows, the pigs and horses seem to recognize us. The friendly touch of human and animal life is always present, unobtrusive, warm and comforting. But these we find everywhere.

To the small coterie that really love Tower Hill there is a subtler, a permanent local influence that somehow one likes to declare emanates from the trees and encircles us from the moment we find ourselves breathing the same air. These grand old oaks, these delicate lady birches, these graceful elms and these stalwart pines are much more than just trees. They are staunch old comrades, sentient creatures who have stood by us in all sorts of weather, who have breathed into our exhausted bodies strength and healing, who have steadfastly supported us while we thrashed out problems, labored at hard labor, both mental and physical, and lent their cooling, quieting presence to the building up of strength, of poise, of efficiency and confidence in future usefulness.

And the odors—somebody wrote an essay once on the relation of odors to recollections. There is an ironwood tree between Maxwelton and Westhope now hanging full of delicate hop-like flowers whose fragrance recalls at every passing a bump on a head years ago when the owner of the head attempted to go home through the little stretch of forest without a lantern, after an evening of George Eliot's poetry at Westhope. The smell of the old cedar close by always reminds us of the big snake that climbed it and settled in its branches to digest the three baby thrashers the parents made such a fuss over, but he never finished the digestive process. As we write, the childish voices of two brave little men are wafted up the Hill and every note reminds us of "Little Ruth" their mother, in her bright red dress and with her mischievous eyes and dancing curls flitting through the same trees twenty-five years ago, a very spirit of the woods. A magnificent Norway pine whose fifty-foot top is loaded with young cones still of a tender green, sends on every wave of the perfect summer breeze a pungent odor that is pregnant with the memory of the day the eight-inch seedling was planted at the corner of the platform bearing the tent that sheltered four very lively boys, and from which tent emerged, night and day, such gruesome and painful vocal noises, augmented by various musical instruments, that popular demand called for a respelling of the name of this annex to Maxwelton and it was changed from "The Braes" to "The Brays." Those four boys are nearing middle life now, "France" is a lawyer possessing a fine standing in his profession and four husky boys of his own. "Rob" is raising fancy fruit and vegetables on his model farm on Long Island between the seasons of registering mirth, hatred, love and the other passions demanded by the "Movie camera," Little "Russ" utilizes his old smile as a city merchant and "Ed" is somewhere in the French trenches or on the way there. The boys laughed at Mother's baby tree and its mates and were officiously anxious about losing them, but during all these years as those nice boys have been developing, so too has the baby tree grown to where it may shelter many tents like theirs and challenge the best climber of them all, even in those active days.

The most striking innovation on the Hill is the brand new boulevard cut in a big circle through the woods over which the halt, the weary and the lazy may be carried to distant hill-side homes, heretofore almost inaccessible to horse and wagon, and they may be carried by auto if they have the right to commandeer one of the numerous cars that seem to be standing round all the time.

We are on the fine highway between Madison and the Mississippi and autos by the dozen rattle over the bridge half a mile away and if their occupants are a certain sort of people they are likely to stop at the Hill for a few hours or days, as did our friends from Madison, Mr. Dudgeon, the head of the State Library Commission, and Prof. Beatty of the English Literature Department at the State University, with their families last week, to get a few good meals and enjoy a good talk with the smiling white-haloed patriarch who is always ready to pause in the serious business of recuperation, even amid such congenial surroundings, to discuss with recognized intellectual equals the latest books, the highest flights of poetry or the possible horizon hope of great leaders of thought, "arisocrats" in Wells' best sense. —A. L. K.

July 30, 1917.

THE THREE HILLS

I

There is a hill in England,
Green fields and a school I know,
Where the balls fly fast in summer,
And the whispering elm trees grow,
A little hill, a dear hill,
And the playing fields below.

II

There is a hill in Flanders,
Heaped with a thousand slain.
Where the shells fly night and noontide,
And the ghosts that died in vain,
A little hill, a hard hill
To the souls that died in pain.

III

There is a hill in Jewry,
Three crosses pierce the sky,
On the midmost He is dying
To save all those who die,
A little hill, a kind hill
To souls in jeopardy.

—*Everard Owen.*

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